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STEPHEN D. COAN
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State Fire Marshal Reminds People to Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery

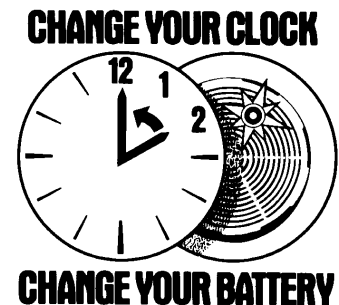
“Just a week after Halloween, Sunday, November 6 marks the end of Daylight Saving Time. Change your clock, change your battery! When you turn the clocks back one hour, don’t forget to change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms,” said State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan.

Change Your Clocks, Change Your Batteries

Approximately every three hours a home fire death occurs somewhere in the nation and the majority occur in homes without working smoke alarms. The most commonly cited causes of non-working smoke alarms are worn or missing batteries. It is imperative that people are aware of the necessity of having working home fire safety devices, in order to protect their families from fire. Communities nationwide witness tragic home fire deaths each year, but there is something that can be done. Coan said, “The easy task of changing the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms can mean the difference between life and death. Everyone can work together to help reduce the number of home fire deaths.”

Coan said, “When you change the batteries on your home fire safety devices this year, inspect the alarms and check the date of manufacture. All electronic devices have a limited life span, so it is important that you replace your older smoke and carbon monoxide alarms with new ones to protect your family.”

Smoke alarms need to be replaced every ten years. If your smoke alarm is ten years old or older, it is time to replace them! Carbon monoxide alarms need to be replaced every five or seven years, depending on the manufacturer. Check for a date of manufacture on the back of the device, or consult the manufacturer’s instructions for the recommended replacement date. If you can’t tell how old they are, it’s time to replace them.



Be Prepared: Plan and Practice Escape Routes

“The peak time for home fire fatalities is when most families are asleep, between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.,” says State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan. “Smoke alarm maintenance is an effortless, efficient way to reduce home fire deaths.”

In addition, Coan recommends residents to also take the time to plan and practice escape routes. “Home fire drills will increase the understanding and confidence that family members need in the case of an emergency,” said Coan.

Reminder: Be Careful with Halloween Costumes, Decorations & Treats

- Be sure all parts of costumes are labeled flame retardant and only use flameproof crepe paper.
- Children should carry flashlights and their costumes should be bright-colored or have reflective tape to highlight them.
- Costumes should not have trailing material or tails long enough to cause falls.
- Use a small flashlight or battery-operated tea light in pumpkins instead of a candle.
- Throw out any treats that appear tampered with, or home-packaged foods unless you’re certain of the source.
- Don’t use fireworks - they are dangerous and illegal in Massachusetts!

For more information on Halloween Safety, contact your local fire department or look at the Department of Fire Services website at www.mass.gov/dfs, click on ***Fire Safety Topics*** and then ***Halloween Safety***, or call the Public Fire Safety Education Hotline at **1-877-9-NO-FIRE**.